

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 1050 without my signature.

One of the sacred tenets of our democracy is that every vote needs to be counted. The question this bill attempts to address is whether county elections officials should count a vote for a write-in candidate when the voter does not mark the voting space next to the write-in candidate's name. It does so by requiring that if the number of votes a qualified write-in candidate receives plus the number of undervotes (where no vote is recorded in a particular race) is equal to or greater than the number of votes garnered by the winner (in a single election) or the minimum number of votes needed to be elected (in a multi-winner election), then the write-in candidate can request that the undervotes be tallied at county expense. At that time, the clerk would discern the voter's intent.

This process will expand the number of manual hand recounts, which will lead to an unnecessary delay in completing the canvass and certifying election results. It will require county elections officials to review every mark on ballots even in situations where it is virtually impossible for the candidate challenging the vote to prevail.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger